Family Life: Marriage. Divorce. Widows & Children

Adopting Positive Characteristics
Leads to Peace of Mind

Family Life: Marriage, Divorce, Widows & Children

ShaykhPod Books

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We pray that Allah, the Exalted, completes His favour on us and accepts each letter of this book in His august court and allows it to testify on our behalf on the Last Day.

All praise to Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds and endless blessings and peace by upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on his blessed Household and Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Compiler's Notes

We have tried diligently to do justice in this volume however if there are any short falls found then the compiler is personally and solely responsible for them.

We accept the possibility of faults and shortcomings in an effort to complete such a difficult task. We might have unconsciously stumbled and committed errors for which we ask for indulgence and forgiveness of our readers and the drawing of our attention thereto will be appreciated. We earnestly invite constructive suggestions which can be made to ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com.

Introduction

The following short book discusses some important aspects of Family Life, including Marriage, Divorce, Widows and Children. This discussion is based on Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, Verses 133-136 of the Holy Quran:

"For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their wives is a waiting time of four months, but if they return [to normal relations] - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. And if they decide on divorce - then indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing. Divorced women remain in waiting [do not remarry] for three periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period] if they want reconciliation. And due to them [i.e., the wives] is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men [i.e., husbands] have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. Divorce is twice. Then [after that], either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with excellent treatment. And it is not lawful for you to take anything of what you have given them unless both fear that they will not be able to keep [within] the limits of Allah. But if you fear that they will not keep [within] the limits of Allah, then there is no blame upon either of them concerning that by which she ransoms herself. These are the limits of Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits of Allah - it is those who are the wrongdoers. And if he has divorced her [for the third time], then she is not lawful to him afterward until [after] she marries a husband other than him. And if he [i.e., the latter husband] divorces her [or dies], there is no blame upon them [i.e., the woman and her former husband] for returning to each other if they think that they can keep [within] the limits of Allah. These are the limits of Allah, which He makes clear to a people who know [understand]. And when you divorce women and they have [nearly]

fulfilled their term, either retain them according to acceptable terms or release them according to acceptable terms, and do not keep them, intending harm, to transgress [against them]. And whoever does that has certainly wronged himself. And do not take the verses of Allah in jest. And remember the favor of Allah upon you and what has been revealed to you of the Book and wisdom by which He instructs you. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Knowing of all things. And when you divorce women and they have fulfilled their term, do not prevent them from (re)marrying their husbands if they agree among themselves on an acceptable basis. That is instructed to whoever of you believes in Allah and the Last Day. That is better for you and purer, and Allah knows and you know not. Mothers may nurse [breastfeed] their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is their [i.e., the mothers'] provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable. No person is charged with more than his capacity. No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child. And upon the [father's] heir is [a duty] like that [of the father]. And if they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them. And if you wish to have your children nursed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you as long as you give payment according to what is acceptable. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Seeing of what you do. And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - they, [the wives, shall] wait four months and ten [days]. And when they have fulfilled their term, then there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner. And Allah is [fully] Aware of what you do. There is no blame upon you for that to which you [indirectly] allude concerning a proposal to women or for what you conceal within yourselves. Allah knows that you will have them in mind. But do not promise them secretly except for saying a proper saying. And do not determine to undertake a marriage contract until the decreed period reaches its end. And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him. And know that Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing. There is no blame upon you if you divorce women you have not touched [been intimate with] nor specified for them an obligation. But give them [a gift of] compensation - the wealthy according to his capability and the poor according to his capability - a provision according

to what is acceptable, a duty upon the doers of good. And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have already specified for them an obligation, then [give] half of what you specified - unless they forego the right or the one in whose hand is the marriage contract foregoes it. And to forego it is nearer to righteousness. And do not forget graciousness between you. Indeed Allah, of whatever you do, is Seeing. Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient. And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding. But when you are secure, then remember Allah [in prayer], as He has taught you that which you did not [previously] know. And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - for their wives is a bequest: maintenance for one year without turning [them] out. But if they leave [of their own accord], then there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable way. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. And for divorced women is a provision according to what is acceptable - a duty upon the righteous. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you might use reason."

Implementing the lessons discussed will aid one to Adopt Positive Characteristics. Adopting Positive Characteristics Leads to Peace of Mind and Body.

Family Life: Marriage, Divorce, Widows & Children

Chapter 2 – Al Baqarah, Verses 226-233

لِّلَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِن نِّسَآئِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ فَإِن فَآءُو فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٦﴾

وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا۟ ٱلطَّلَٰقَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٧﴾

وَٱلْمُطَلَّقَٰتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَٰثَةَ قُرُوٓءٍ ۚ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَن يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ
أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِن كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَّ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوٓا۟ إِصْلَٰحًا ۚ وَلَهُنَّ
مِثْلُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٨﴾

ٱلطَّلَٰقُ مَرَّتَانِ ۖ فَإِمْسَاكٌۢ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌۢ بِإِحْسَٰنٍ ۗ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَن تَأْخُذُوا۟ مِمَّآ
ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّآ أَن يَخَافَآ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا ٱفْتَدَتْ بِهِۦ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ۚ وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ
﴿٢٢٩﴾

فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدُ حَتَّىٰ تَنكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُۥ ۗ فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَآ أَن يَتَرَاجَعَآ إِن
ظَنَّآ أَن يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٠﴾

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا
تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا۟ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُۥ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ هُزُوًا
وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَآ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلْحِكْمَةِ يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣١﴾

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَن يَنكِحْنَ أَزْوَٰجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَٰضَوْا۟ بَيْنَهُم
بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِۦ مَن كَانَ مِنكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ
وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٢﴾

۞ وَٱلْوَٰلِدَٰتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَٰدَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ ۖ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يُتِمَّ ٱلرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى ٱلْمَوْلُودِ لَهُۥ
رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا تُضَآرَّ وَٰلِدَةٌۢ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ
لَّهُۥ بِوَلَدِهِۦ وَعَلَى ٱلْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَٰلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا
وَإِنْ أَرَدتُّمْ أَن تَسْتَرْضِعُوٓا۟ أَوْلَٰدَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُم مَّآ ءَاتَيْتُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٣﴾

“For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their wives is a waiting time of four months, but if they return [to normal relations] - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.

And if they decide on divorce - then indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing.

Divorced women remain in waiting [do not remarry] for three periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period] if they want reconciliation. And due to them [i.e., the wives] is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men [i.e., husbands] have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.

Divorce is twice. Then [after that], either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with excellent treatment. And it is not lawful for you to take anything of what you have given them unless both fear that they will not be able to keep [within] the limits of Allah. But if you fear that they will not keep [within] the limits of Allah, then there is no blame upon either of them concerning that by which she ransoms herself. These are the limits of Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits of Allah - it is those who are the wrongdoers.

And if he has divorced her [for the third time], then she is not lawful to him afterward until [after] she marries a husband other than him. And if he [i.e., the latter husband] divorces her [or dies], there is no blame upon them [i.e., the woman and her former husband] for returning to each other if they think that they can keep [within] the limits of Allah. These are the limits of Allah, which He makes clear to a people who know [understand].

And when you divorce women and they have [nearly] fulfilled their term, either retain them according to acceptable terms or release them according to acceptable terms, and do not keep them, intending harm, to transgress [against them]. And whoever does that has certainly wronged himself. And do not take the verses of Allah in jest. And remember the favor of Allah upon you and what has been revealed to you of the Book and wisdom by which He instructs you. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Knowing of all things.

And when you divorce women and they have fulfilled their term, do not prevent them from (re)marrying their husbands if they agree among themselves on an acceptable basis. That is instructed to whoever of you

believes in Allah and the Last Day. That is better for you and purer, and Allah knows and you know not.

Mothers may nurse [breastfeed] their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is their [i.e., the mothers'] provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable. No person is charged with more than his capacity. No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child. And upon the [father's] heir is [a duty] like that [of the father]. And if they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them. And if you wish to have your children nursed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you as long as you give payment according to what is acceptable. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Seeing of what you do."

The previous verses discussed the importance of controlling one's speech and avoiding making disliked oaths. A specific example is then given at the beginning of the main verses under discussion which was widely practiced in Arab society. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 226:

"*For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their wives is a waiting time of four months…"*

This again indicates the importance of controlling one's speech in order to protect themself and others from trouble in both worlds. Generally speaking, there are three types of speech. The first is sinful speech and must be avoided at all times, as the main reason for attracting trouble and stress to oneself in this world is through words, especially sinful words. In addition, evil words spoken will be the main reason people enter Hell on Judgement Day. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2616. The second type of speech is vain speech. Even though this is not considered a sin, none the less it should be avoided as vain speech often leads to sinful speech. For example, vain speech often leads to backbiting and gossiping about others. In addition, it is a waste of time and energy which often leads to stress and arguments in this world and it will be a great regret for a person on Judgement Day, especially when they observe those who used their time and energy in the correct way and the reward they receive as a consequence. The third type of speech is good and beneficial speech and should be spoken in both worldly and religious matters. Therefore, one must try to remove two-thirds of speech from their life. This is a reason why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2501, that whoever is silent is saved.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 226:

"*For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their wives is a waiting time of four months…"*

In the time before Islam, an angry husband would take this oath but not put a time restriction on it. This has been discussed in Imam Al Wahidi's, Asbab Al Nuzul, 2:226. This was a clear injustice towards his wife as she was not divorced so that she could remarry nor was she living in a real marriage with her husband. Allah, the Exalted, put an end to this foolish and unjust practice by putting a limit on this separation.

The four months waiting period before the divorce is finalized has been set in order to allow the emotions of both the husband and wife to calm down so that they can assess the positive and negative aspects of remaining married or getting divorced with a clear, unbiased and overly emotional mind so that they can make an informed decision which they will not later regret. However, this informed decision is not achieved when divorce occurs immediately and people often do not desire to change their mind out of self-respect and shame, which only aids further stress to a person's regret. In addition, this time allows for a pregnancy to manifest itself and must not be concealed by the wife, as the husband has a right to know before he decides on divorcing her or not. Finally, a waiting period prevents the couple who choose to divorce from rushing emotionally into another marriage, which will only lead to further problems for them.

If a husband breaks his vow while realizing he made a mistake and instead desires to stay with his wife, then he will find that Allah, the Exalted, does not punish him for his hastiness. Instead, Allah, the Exalted, will show forgiveness and mercy towards them both, but the husband does need to compensate for their broken oath, as prescribed by Islam. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 226:

“For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their wives is a waiting time of four months, but if they return [to normal relations] - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”

The divine attributes of forgiveness and mercy remind married couples to show mercy and forgiveness to each other, as adopting these two characteristics will prevent them from overreacting in situations which often lead to arguments, especially over problems which can be easily resolved without resulting to a divorce. Though it is important to mention that in serious situations, such as physical abuse, a person must take the steps to protect themself and others, such as their children, even if it means divorcing their spouse, as Islam has never encouraged people to endure this type of abuse. Only after protecting oneself, so that history does not repeat itself, should a person strive to forgive others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and then move on with their life.

Allah, the Exalted, then indicates the importance of involving outside help in dealing with marriage troubles which cannot be resolved by the couple. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 227:

“And if they decide on divorce…”

The plural word, which indicates more than two people, instead of the dual Arabic word is used. A married couple must first strive to correct the issues between them. They must put aside their biases and emotions and try hard to deal with problems objectively and logically under the guidance of Islam. While dealing with the problems, the couple must continue to show respect to each other, as this has been commanded by Allah, the Exalted, even if their spouse fails to do this. They must treat each other how they desire for their beloved to be treated by their spouse. In addition, they must strive to minimize the chances of problems by learning the rights they owe their spouse and the rights they are owed by their spouse. A major cause of marriage problems and divorce is when a person demands things from their spouse which they are not entitled to. All of these things can only be achieved when one chooses a spouse based on the teachings of Islam, which is to marry a person who possesses piety. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5090. The one who fears Allah, the Exalted, will not mistreat their spouse, even when they are angry with them and they will strive to fulfil their rights, knowing Allah, the Exalted, will hold them accountable. Whereas, the one who does not fear Allah, the Exalted, will easy mistreat their spouse and they will not fulfil the rights of their spouse, even if they claim to love them.

If the married couple fail to solve the problems themselves, then they should turn to outside help, such as relatives and marriage counselling. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 35:

“And if you fear dissension between the two, send an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from her people. If they both desire reconciliation, Allāh will cause it between them. Indeed, Allāh is ever Knowing and Aware.”

But as indicated by this verse, the people that are called upon to help, must possess experience, Islamic knowledge, wisdom and the fear of Allah, the Exalted. Only when they possess these characteristics will they behave in an honest and sincere way which aids the married couple. Sadly, many muslims fail to ask help from the correct people and as a result they only make things worse. The person who does not possess these characteristics will only care about proving their side is right and the other side is wrong. Nor will they possess the knowledge of the rights spouses owe each other and as a result all the things they argue about will be in favor of their side, instead of being honest and fair.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 227:

“And if they decide on divorce…”

The Arabic word for decide in this verse means a strong determination. Therefore, when one side is fully determined to divorce, then this should not be opposed by the other side, as it only leads to further problems and enmity between the two sides and prolongs stress. In this case, it is best to move on swiftly with the divorce proceedings and then move on with life.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 227:

“And if they decide on divorce - then indeed, Allāh is Hearing and Knowing.”

Whether a couple decide to stay together or get divorced, they and the other people involved, such as their relatives, must maintain good manners towards each other, as commanded by Islam. As Allah, the Exalted, hears and knows their intention, speech and actions, He will therefore hold them accountable in both worlds. In addition, if a couple decide to divorce, then Allah, the Exalted, will aid them in obtaining a peaceful life, as He is fully aware of their situation, as long as they maintain their sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted. This involves using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Him, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This ensures they achieve a balanced mental and physical state, which in turn leads to peace of mind in both worlds. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 130:

“But if they separate [by divorce], Allāh will enrich each [of them] from His abundance. And ever is Allāh Encompassing and Wise.”

When a divorce is issued, the woman must wait for three monthly period cycles before the divorce is finalized and then she is free to remarry. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 228:

“Divorced women remain in waiting [i.e., do not remarry] for three periods…”

As discussed earlier, this waiting time before the divorce is finalized has been set in order to allow emotions of both the husband and wife to calm down so that they can assess the positive and negative aspects of remaining married or getting divorced with a clear, unbiased and overly emotional mind so that they can make an informed decision which they will not later regret. This is the reason why a woman in her waiting period must remain in her husband’s home so that it is more likely they appreciate each other after their emotions have calmed down. This has been indicated at the end of the following verse. Chapter 65 At Talaq, verse 1:

“O Prophet, when you [Muslims] divorce women, divorce them for [the commencement of] their waiting period and keep count of the waiting period, and fear Allāh, your Lord. Do not turn them out of their [husbands']

houses, nor should they [themselves] leave [during that period] unless they are committing a clear immorality. And those are the limits [set by] Allāh. And whoever transgresses the limits of Allāh has certainly wronged himself. You know not; perhaps Allāh will bring about after that a [different] matter."

However, this informed decision is not achieved when divorce occurs immediately and people often do not desire to change their mind out of self-respect and shame, which only adds stress to a person's regret. In addition, a waiting period prevents the couple who choose to divorce from rushing emotionally into another marriage, which will only lead to further problems for them. Finally, this time allows for a pregnancy to manifest and must not be concealed by the wife as the husband has a right to know before he decides on divorcing her or not. The presence of a child will undoubtedly affect the thought process of a husband in respect to divorcing his wife or not. This issue is so important that Allah, the Exalted, connected this with belief in Himself and Judgement Day. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 228:

"…and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allāh has created in their wombs if they believe in Allāh and the Last Day…"

Yet again, Allah, the Exalted, makes it clear that the relationship between people, such as a married couple, is directly connected to His obedience or disobedience. Sadly, many muslims completely separate the rights of Allah, the Exalted, from the rights of people and believe that Allah, the Exalted, is not concerned about the rights of people. As a result, these muslims are good at fulfilling the rights of Allah, the Exalted, such as the obligatory

prayers, but are terrible at fulfilling the rights of people and often wrong them. This misguided belief must be avoided as it leads to trouble in both worlds. Justice will be established on Judgement Day. The one who wronged others will be forced to hand over their good deeds to their victims and if necessary, the wrongdoer will take the sins of their victims. This may well cause the wrongdoer to be hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579. Therefore, it is vital to strive to fulfil the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and people. In respect to people, this is best achieved when one treats others in a way they themself desire to be treated by people.

Allah, the Exalted, placed the responsibility of issuing a divorce or retracting it in the hands of the husband. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 228:

"…And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period] if they want reconciliation…"

This is because, generally speaking, men are less emotional than women and are therefore less likely to issue divorce to their spouse based on emotions. In addition, as all the financial responsibilities of the household, including the wife and children, are on the husband, it is only fair he has the right to issue the divorce or retract it. But it is important to note that a husband can only take his wife back during the waiting period if they desire reconciliation. He cannot do it to cause harm to his wife, such as prolonging the divorce proceedings in order to make her life harder. This has been specifically warned against in the next verse and in other verses of the Holy Quran. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 229:

“Divorce is twice. Then [after that], either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment…”

And chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 228:

“…And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period] if they want reconciliation. And due to them [i.e., the wives] is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable…”

The first thing to note is that Allah, the Exalted, mentioned the rights of women before mentioning the rights of men within a marriage. Therefore, the husband who fears Allah, the Exalted, will strive hard to fulfil the rights of his wife, even if she occasionally fails to fulfil his rights.

Generally speaking, a Muslim should never become so self-absorbed that they only care about the rights people owe them. Instead they should strive to fulfil the rights of others according to their means and strength in order to please Allah, the Exalted. Allah, the Exalted, will not ask a person on Judgement Day if people fulfilled their rights, He will instead ask the person if they fulfilled the rights of people. Therefore, they should be more concerned with fulfilling the rights of people then only caring about the

rights people owe them. In addition, striving to fulfil the rights of others is also an aspect of being sincere to them and the one who behaves in this manner will find the support of Allah, the Exalted, in respect to their rights.

In addition, during a time when women had no rights across the globe, it was Allah, the Exalted, that granted them it over 1400 years ago. For example, Islam has granted women such honour, as no other institution or faith ever has, such as placing Paradise, which is the ultimate bliss, beneath the feet of a woman, namely one's mother. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3106. In another Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3895, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that the best man is the one who treats his wife in the best way. In the previous verses, Allah, the Exalted, indicated the importance of showing more care and respect to women during their monthly periods as it causes them pain. This extra care and respect was practically demonstrated by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, towards his wives, and must be emulated. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 222:

“And they ask you about menstruation. Say, "It is pain,…””

Before Islam, in the age of ignorance, it was common practice for women to be equated with articles of home use. They would be bought and sold like cattle. A woman had no rights in respect to marriage. Far from being entitled to some share in the inheritance from her relatives, she herself was treated as a piece of the inheritance like other household items. She was considered as something owned by men while she was allowed to own

nothing. And she could only spend according to the wishes of a man. Whereas, the man could spend any wealth which would belong to her, like wages, according to his desires. She did not even have the right to question this method. Some groups from Europe even considered women not to be human and equated her with an animal. Women had no place in religion. They were considered unfit for worship. Some even declared women to possess no souls. It was considered completely normal for a father to kill his newborn or young daughter as they were seen as a shame on the family. Some even believed that no act of justice would be taken against the one who killed a woman. Some customs even killed the wife of a dead husband as she was not seen fit enough to live without him. Some even declared that the purpose of women was only to serve men.

But Allah, the Exalted, through the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, taught man to respect all people, made justice and equity the law and men were made responsible for fulfilling the rights of women parallel to their own rights on them. Women were made free and independent. She became the owner of her own life and property, just like men. No man can force a woman to marry someone. If she is forced to without her consent then it becomes her choice to continue the marriage or annul it. No man has a right to spend anything from what belongs to her without her consent and approval. After the death of her husband or after divorce she becomes independent and she cannot be compelled by anyone to do anything. She gets a share in the inheritance like men according to the responsibilities given to her by Allah, the Exalted. To spend on women and treat them well has been declared an act of worship by Allah, the Exalted. All these rights and more have been given to women by none other than Allah, the Exalted. It is strange how those who stand up for women’s rights today criticize Islam even though it gave women rights centuries earlier.

In the main verses under discussion, Allah, the Exalted, highlighted that the rights of the wife are equal to that of a husband and both must strive hard to fulfil each other's rights. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 228:

"…And due to them [i.e., the wives] is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men [i.e., husbands] have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]…"

The higher position within the household granted to the husband relates to their higher responsibility. It is the duty of a husband to financially provide for his wife, children and the household expenses. The wife has no financial responsibility within the household. In fact, generally speaking, she does not have any financial responsibility even before marriage, as her father was responsible for her and in elderly age, the responsibility falls on her children, if she is a widow or divorcee. This higher degree of responsibility is not something to celebrate or boast about as it means a man has more to answer for on the Day of Judgement. And the one who has their deeds scrutinized on the Day of Judgement will be punished. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 103. Therefore, only a fool desires more responsibilities which they will be held accountable for in the court of Allah, the Exalted. Women should therefore be pleased they were excused from these responsibilities instead of moaning about it. In addition, the Companion, Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, has reportedly said that this degree is an encouragement for men to behave well and spend their wealth appropriately on their wives because the one preferred must make a greater effort to adopt good character. This has been discussed in Tafsir Al Qurtubi, Volume 1, Page 580.

But even though husbands have been given a higher position within the family because of their extra responsibilities, Allah, the Exalted, warns them not to abuse their position, as He will hold them accountable for this in both worlds, as no one can escape His might. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 228:

"…But the men [i.e., husbands] have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]. And Allāh is Exalted in Might…"

Allah, the Exalted, finishes verse 228 by reminding people as He alone possesses full and complete knowledge of all things, such as the mental and physical states of people and how to organize the family home, He alone is in the best position to grant people the code of conduct they need in order to achieve peace of mind within their family. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 228:

"…And Allāh is Exalted in Might and Wise."

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 228:

“…And due to them [i.e., the wives] is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men [i.e., husbands] have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]…”

Generally speaking, as Allah, the Exalted, has set a single standard which makes one superior to others, muslims must strive to fulfil this single standard and leave all other worldly standards which differentiate between people, such as gender, ethnicity and social status. Chapter 49 Al Hujurat, verse 13:

“…Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you…”

Righteousness involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This leads to a balanced mental and physical state which in turn leads to peace of mind in both worlds. Therefore, the more righteous a person is, the better they are. All other standards which separate people, such as gender, must be ignored as they do not have any value in Islam. But it is important to note that as a person’s intention is hidden, people should not judge themself or others to be better than other people based on their outward actions. Chapter 53 An Najm, verse 32:

“…So do not claim yourselves to be pure; He is most knowing of who fears Him.”

Allah, the Exalted, then warned against the widespread culture of taking back one’s wife in order to cause her pain and suffering. In fact, pre-Islam, the Arabs would not have a limit on how many times a husband could take back his wife during her waiting period and as a result, a wife would be stuck within her marriage indefinitely. Allah, the Exalted, corrected this and set the limit of taking one’s wife back during her waiting period to twice and warned against mistreating them whether they decide on divorce or remaining married. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 229:

“Divorce is twice. Then [after that], either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment…”

Again, the command to treat the spouse well has been directed at the husband and indirectly includes the wife treating her husband in a good manner. Therefore, a husband must take the initial steps to treat his wife correctly according to the teachings of Islam and strive to fix any issues between them. It is amazing how in this day and age, wives often complain about the lack of enthusiasm from their husbands to seek outside help with their marriage issues, such as marriage counselling, even though Allah, the Exalted, has indicated that the husband should be more eager to fix the marriage issues, even if this means seeking help from outsiders.

In addition, maintaining good treatment, whether one divorces their spouse or remains with them, can be achieved when one treats their spouse in a way they desire their beloved to be treated by their spouse.

In a time where women were classified as household objects and were inherited by men, Allah, the Exalted, went a step further and made it clear that the dowry granted to the wife and any other gift given to her cannot be forcibly taken back from her by the husband or his family, as this would be classified as stealing. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 229:

"…And it is not lawful for you to take anything of what you have given them…"

A wife can voluntarily return the gifts to her husband if it helps her secure a divorce from him. But even in this case, as discussed earlier, before she, or the husband decide on divorce, they should involve outside people to help resolve the issues between them. The people who possess experience, Islamic knowledge and the fear of Allah, the Exalted, as the one who possesses these characteristics will be sincere and honest towards both sides. Relying on outside help has been indicated in the wording, as the plural has been used instead of the dual form, which would only indicate the husband and wife. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 229:

“…And it is not lawful for you to take anything of what you have given them unless both fear that they will not be able to keep [within] the limits of Allāh. But if you fear that they will not keep [within] the limits of Allāh, then there is no blame upon either of them concerning that by which she ransoms herself…”

After discussing the importance of good treatment between spouses, especially during marriage difficulties, Allah reinforces the reality that mistreating each other is transgressing against His limits, even though a marriage and its issues are between two people. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 229:

“…These are the limits of Allāh, so do not transgress them…”

As discussed earlier, it is vital to understand that the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and people are linked in Islam and cannot be separated. Therefore, one must strive hard to fulfil both in order to achieve peace of mind and success. Fulfilling the rights of Allah, the Exalted, involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will aid one in fulfilling the rights of people, as it includes controlling one’s behaviour towards others. In addition, a person must fulfil the rights of people according to Islamic teachings. This is best achieved when a person treats others in a way they themself desire to be treated by the general public. In fact, the one who loves for others what they love for themself is the definition of a

believer. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515.

Whereas, the one who transgresses the limits of Allah, the Exalted, by misusing the blessings they have been granted will fail to obtain a balanced mental and physical state, which will prevent them obtaining peace of mind, even if they experience moments of fun. This is quite evident when one observes the wealthy and how they are plagued with mental disorders, as they misuse the blessings they have been granted. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 82:

“So let them laugh a little and [then] weep much as recompense for what they used to earn.”

Chapter 20 Taha, verses 124-126:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind." He will say, "My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?" [Allāh] will say, "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot [i.e., disregarded] them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten.""

The stress caused by misusing the blessings one has been granted is similar to a large library of books which are not arranged in any order. As a result, a person looking for a specific book will face great stress finding it. Whereas, the one who looks for a specific book within a well-organized library will easily find it with minimal stress. This is similar to the person who uses the blessings they have been granted correctly, in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as this ensures all the worldly blessings one has been granted, including the people within their life, is organized within their life correctly, just like the well-organized library of books.

And transgressing the limits of Allah, the Exalted, will cause one to wrong others. This wrongdoer will face justice in both worlds, especially on Judgement Day. The wrongdoer will be forced to hand over their good deeds to their victims and if necessary, they will take the sins of their victims until justice is established. This may well cause the wrongdoer to be hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579.

A married couple should not reach a third declaration of divorce, as this contradicts the manner of divorce prescribed by Islam. But if they do, then a penalty for abusing the manner prescribed by Islam is put into effect. The divorced couple can no longer remarry, unless the wife marries someone else and consummates her marriage and then divorces her second husband or he dies. Marrying a woman with the intention to divorce so that she can remarry her first husband is forbidden. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 2076. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 230:

“And if he has divorced her [for the third time], then she is not lawful to him afterward until [after] she marries a husband other than him…”

Sadly, there are many ignorant Muslims who believe that a divorce should not be done through words as they claim one can say it in a moment of anger even though they do not fully mean it. The first thing to note is that if one follows the advice of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they would never pronounce all three divorces in one go. This has been strongly criticized by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. In fact, he called behaving in this manner as mocking the Holy Quran. This has been confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 3430. The one who does so clearly cannot control their tongue especially, in such serious cases, therefore they are not mature enough to be married in the first place. Secondly, if one follows the advice given by Islam and gives divorce verbally on separate occasions, this allows for their emotions to calm down so that they can think things through before giving the next divorce. Finally, it is strange how a Muslim accepts that a person who was unlawful to them prior to marriage can become lawful to them through words yet object to the concept of ending a marriage through words. This objection is only fueled by one’s ignorance and desires. If one must object to divorce through words they should object to marriage through words also. In addition, even giving three divorces separately is something which is disliked by Islam. This has been indicated by the previous verse, chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 229:

“Divorce is twice. Then [after that], either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with excellent treatment…”

One should instead give one divorce and let the waiting period end without taking back their wife as this would cause the marriage to end or at the most give two separate divorces and then let the waiting periods end. If this occurs then the couple can get re-married with a new marriage contract without the need for the wife to get married to someone else first. But if they do get re-married then a single pronunciation of divorce would permanently separate the two, as two pronunciations have already been used in their first marriage.

Therefore, as discussed earlier, a Muslim must strive to control their tongue in all aspects of their life as an uncontrolled tongue leads to trouble in both worlds. In addition, they must adhere to the technique advised by Islam in all aspects of their life so that they avoid behaving in a hasty way which they later regret.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 230:

“And if he has divorced her [for the third time], then she is not lawful to him afterward until [after] she marries a husband other than him…”

Generally speaking, this warns muslims not to mock Islamic teachings by intentionally misinterpreting them or choosing when to implement them and went to ignore them according to one's desires. This ridicule is something they will answer for in both worlds, as it is not only disrespectful but also misrepresents Islam to the outside world. Just like an ambassador faces consequences when they misrepresent their nation, so will the muslim who intentionally misrepresents Islam, as representing Islam correctly is a duty on every muslim.

But as feelings change over time and as people can make mistakes they later regret, Allah, the Exalted, allows a couple to remarry after the second husband divorces his wife or if he dies. But this remarriage should only be pursued if the couple have learned from their past mistakes and are determined to make things work between them, which involves fulfilling the rights of each other according to Islamic teachings. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 230:

"…And if he [i.e., the latter husband] divorces her [or dies], there is no blame upon them [i.e., the woman and her former husband] for returning to each other if they think that they can keep [within] the limits of Allāh…"

Allah, the Exalted, yet again makes it clear that the relationship between people and fulfilling the rights of others is directly connected to His obedience. Failing to treat others according to the teachings of Islam is crossing the limits of Allah, the Exalted, and must therefore be avoided at

all costs. This is best achieved when one strives to treat others how they themself wish to be treated by other people.

Allah, the Exalted, alone is in the position to provide a code of conduct for humans to live by, such as the code of conduct between spouses, as He alone possesses full knowledge of the mental and physical state of humans, the different problems that can occur within marriage and how to correct them. Any other code of conduct will always be imperfect due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of marriage issues and the mental states of spouses, even with the advancements made in this field. For example, a marriage counsellor, irrespective of their experience, will not know every aspect of the mental state of spouses and all the marriage issues between couples which vary between people, especially within different ethnicities, cultures and religions. All of this knowledge cannot be encompassed by people. Only Allah, the Exalted, alone has encompassed this and all other types of knowledge. Therefore, if one desires correct guidance in marriage, or any other aspect of life, then they must rely on the teachings of Islam to achieve a successful marriage and a comfortable family home, which is an important aspect of achieving peace of mind. Only those who possess Islamic knowledge can truly appreciate this truth. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 230:

“…These are the limits of Allāh, which He makes clear to a people who know [understand].”

As mentioned earlier, Allah, the Exalted repeatedly warns the husband to avoid causing distress to his wife if they choose to continue the marriage or divorce. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 231:

“And when you divorce women and they have [nearly] fulfilled their term, either retain them according to acceptable terms or release them according to acceptable terms, and do not keep them, intending harm, to transgress [against them]…”

Allah, the Exalted, then explains a universal principle through a specific example. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 231:

“And when you divorce women and they have [nearly] fulfilled their term, either retain them according to acceptable terms or release them according to acceptable terms, and do not keep them, intending harm, to transgress [against them]. And whoever does that has certainly wronged himself…”

The one who harms others is in reality harming themself, even if this is not obvious to them. This is because a person cannot escape the control of Allah, the Exalted, and they will therefore face the consequences of their actions in both worlds. In this world, the very things they possess will become a source of stress and misery for them, even if they experience moments of fun. In the hereafter, Allah, the Exalted, will establish justice which will cause the wrongdoer to hand over their good deeds to their

victims and if necessary, the wrongdoer will take the sins of their victims. This may well cause the wrongdoer to be hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579. Therefore, one must avoid wronging others for their own sake, as the harm they cause will only rebound back to themself.

As mentioned earlier, muslims must avoid mocking Islam by verbally claiming faith in it but failing to practically act on it. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 231:

"…And do not take the verses of Allāh in jest…"

This mocking will prevent them using the blessings they have been granted correctly and as a result it will lead to an unbalanced mental and physical state. This in turn leads to stress, misery and trouble in both worlds, even if one experiences moments of fun. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 82:

"So let them laugh a little and [then] weep much as recompense for what they used to earn."

Chapter 20 Taha, verses 124-126:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind." He will say, "My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?" [Allāh] will say, "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot [i.e., disregarded] them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten.""

In addition, this mocking will cause a muslim to misrepresent Islam to the outside world and as a result they will be guided away from it. This is something every muslim will answer for, as they took on the responsibility of representing Islam correctly the moment they accepted Islam as their faith.

Instead, one must show gratitude for the guidance granted to them in the form of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by learning and acting on them. They outline how a person should use the blessings they have been granted by Allah, the Exalted, so that they achieve a balanced mental and physical state, which in turn leads to peace of mind in both worlds for an individual, a family and the wider society. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 231:

“…And remember the favor of Allāh upon you and what has been revealed to you of the Book and wisdom by which He instructs you…”

As mentioned earlier, as Allah, the Exalted, alone possesses knowledge of all things, especially the mental and physical state of people and how to solve all the issues a person or a society can face in this world, He alone can instruct mankind how to live in order to achieve peace of mind. All man-made instructions cannot achieve this outcome due to a lack of knowledge, foresight and biases.

Wisdom is mentioned in verse 231, as it teaches one how to use the knowledge they have been granted correctly so that it benefits them and others in both worlds. Islamic knowledge equips one with wisdom so that they use all their worldly and religious knowledge correctly which ensures they use the blessings they have been granted correctly, which in turn leads to peace of mind. Without wisdom, a person will easily misuse the knowledge they possess. For example, scientific knowledge can lead to dangerous things being developed, such as a weapons, if wisdom is not applied. Whereas, the one who has wisdom will use their knowledge of science to create useful things, such as medicines. This wisdom is obtained through learning and acting on Islamic teachings.

Allah, the Exalted, then reminds muslims to adhere to the teachings of Islam so that they obtain peace of mind in both worlds, even if it contradicts their desires and the advice of social media, fashion and culture. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 231:

“…And fear Allah and know that Allāh is Knowing of all things.”

A person must behave like a wise patient who accepts and acts on the medical advice of their doctor, knowing it is best for them, even though they are prescribed bitter medicines and a strict diet plan. Just like this wise patient will achieve good mental and physical health, so will the person who accepts and acts on the advice of Islam. Whereas, the patient who rejects the advice of their doctor, as it contradicts their desires, will obtain poor mental and physical health and so will the person who rejects the teachings of Islam as it contradicts their desires. A doctor can make a mistake but as Allah, the Exalted, knows all things, the code of conduct He has granted mankind is guaranteed to lead to peace of mind in both worlds.

Whichever path a person chooses they will face the consequences of their choice in both worlds, as they cannot escape the power and knowledge of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 231:

“…And fear Allah and know that Allāh is Knowing of all things.”

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 232:

“And when you divorce women and they have fulfilled their term, do not prevent them from remarrying their husbands if they agree among themselves on an acceptable basis…”

This could mean that people should not cause trouble for divorced women which prevents them from getting married to someone else. Sadly, this often happens amongst muslims, whereby the family of the former husband will spread rumours about his former wife so that she finds it difficult to find another husband. This is an evil characteristic to adopt as no one would like their daughter to be treated in this manner so how can a muslim treat someone else’s daughter in this way? Islam makes it clear that a person must treat others in a way they desire their loved ones to be treated by other people. In fact, this is the sign of a true believer according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515. Destroying the reputation of others is a serious sin which must be avoided as it is a great act of disobedience towards Allah, the Exalted, and someone else. When one commits a serious sin like this, it often leads to destruction in both worlds.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 232:

“And when you divorce women and they have fulfilled their term, do not prevent them from remarrying their husbands if they agree among themselves on an acceptable basis…”

This verse can also mean that the relatives of both sides should not prevent a divorced couple from remarrying each other, as long as they both learn from their past mistakes and resolve to fulfil the rights of each other in the future according to the teachings of Islam. This interpretation is supported by a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2981. During the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, a brother initially prevented his sister from remarrying her husband after he had divorced her once and the waiting period had elapsed. After this verse was revealed he sincerely submitted to the command of Allah, the Exalted, and allowed them to get remarried.

Allah, the Exalted, warns people not to block their lawful marriage as blocking is a form of declaring something unlawful when it has been made lawful by Allah, the Exalted. This is such a serious issue that it directly challenges a person's claim of believing in Allah, the Exalted, and Judgement Day. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 232:

"…That is instructed to whoever of you believes in Allāh and the Last Day…"

Sadly, behaving in this manner whereby one acts as if something is unlawful when Allah, the Exalted, made it lawful, is something which often occurs amongst muslims. For example, many muslims will prevent their children from lawful marriages due to unislamic reasons, such as the spouse being from a different country then them. This is a serious issue as no one has the right to make things lawful or unlawful according to their desires as it directly challenges the authority of Allah, the Exalted. This

must therefore be avoided at all costs. As ignorance is the main cause of this behaviour, one must learn and act on Islamic teachings to avoid it.

In addition, as indicated in verse 232, blocking a lawful marriage can often result in an unlawful relationship between the two, which only leads to trouble in both worlds for everyone involved. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 232:

"…That is better for you and purer…"

Whatever reasons the two families may have to prevent the marriage from occurring is based on a lack of knowledge of the future. In most cases, their choice is based on emotions not evidence. Therefore, they are not in a position to make this decision, only Allah, the Exalted, can make this decision as He knows all things. And as Allah, the Exalted, has made the marriage lawful, others should not attempt to make it unlawful. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 232:

"…and Allāh knows and you know not."

The following is some general advice for married muslims in order to avoid marriage difficulties which can lead to a divorce.

As mentioned earlier, a person must choose a spouse based on the teachings of Islam. As advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5090, a person must choose a spouse who possesses piety. This will ensure they fulfil the rights of their spouse and avoid wronging them, even when they are angry, as they fear facing the consequences of their actions. Whereas, the one who does not fear Allah, the Exalted, will not fulfil the rights of their spouse and they will easily wrong them, as they do not fear the consequences of their choices and actions.

In addition, if a Muslim behaves as the Earth and supports their spouse at all times, then their spouse will become the sky for them by sheltering them from harm. If a Muslim gives peace of mind and body to their spouse then in return they will become a pillar of financial, mental and physical support for them. If a Muslim strives to keep their spouse happy within the laws of Islam then they will find that their spouse in turn does the same. If they respect and honor their spouse they will receive the same. Meaning, what one gives is what they will receive.

A Muslim should be modest and only speak and act in a way which pleases Allah, the Exalted, and their spouse. They should be content with their marriage and what they possess as this is true richness and happiness. It is quite evident if one observes the media that fame and fortune does not bring happiness. In fact, the majority of celebrities end up divorced despite their fame and fortune. A Muslim should ensure they should adorn themself for their spouse while avoiding extravagance and waste as this is an aspect of maintaining the love they share. One should always be aware of the

mood of their spouse and speak and act appropriately, as arguments can occur even if the right thing is said at the inappropriate time for example, when one is hungry or tired. A Muslim should appreciate the value of money and not waste it as this is disliked by Allah, the Exalted, and disliked by a spouse who fears Allah, the Exalted. The married couple should give top priority to educating themselves in religious matters and ensuring their children gain a good education in both worldly and religious matters. This education will strengthen the bond between them. A Muslim should try to fulfill the reasonable requests of their spouse as long as it does not challenge the commands of Allah, the Exalted, as constantly denying one's spouse can lead to anger and arguments. Anything which occurs between them should be kept secret as revealing secrets can fracture the trust between a married couple. The only exception is when one seeks the advice of another but even then it should not become a public matter and should not be spread to too many people. A Muslim should, within limits, try to mirror the emotions of their spouse for example, they should not be openly happy when their spouse is sad as this can make a person believe their spouse does not care about their feelings. A Muslim should learn to sacrifice and compromise for the sake of their spouse within the limits of Islam as this will cause their spouse to strive to keep them pleased. A good way to remember all this is that a Muslim should treat their spouse in the same way they would like their beloved to be treated by their spouse. For example, a husband should treat his wife the same way he would like his son-in-law to treat his daughter. Or a wife should treat her husband the same way she would like her daughter-in-law to treat her son. Adopting this mentality alone would be enough to solve countless problems within marriage.

Allah, the Exalted, then moves onto discussing the matter of taking care of children after a divorce. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 233:

“Mothers may nurse [i.e., breastfeed] their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is their [i.e., the mothers'] provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable…”

The financial responsibility involved in raising their child is completely on the husband and the financial needs of the former wife during the period she breastfeeds their child is also on her former husband. As this duty has been set by Allah, the Exalted, a man must not ignore it as they will be held accountable for it in both worlds.

Allah, the Exalted, then makes clear that every duty within Islam can be fulfilled by people, as He does not charge a duty on a person they cannot complete nor does He decree a situation a person cannot face while maintaining obedience to Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 233:

“…No person is charged with more than his capacity…”

As this has been repeated throughout the Holy Quran, it leaves people with no excuses for failing to complete their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people, according to the teachings of Islam. Sadly, many people claim they are trying their best in fulfilling their duties yet fail to fulfil them. They

must understand that if they were trying their best they would fulfill all their duties as this has been guaranteed by Allah, the Exalted, therefore, they are not trying their best. People must abandon laziness as poor excuses will not be accepted by Allah, the Exalted, as He knows best what people are capable of and has set duties for them accordingly.

Allah, the Exalted, then warns muslims to avoid using their children as a weapon to cause stress to their former spouse. Instead, each person must strive to fulfil the rights of their family according to the teachings of Islam. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 233:

“…No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child…”

The first thing to note is that harming the mother is mentioned before harming the father, through their child. This indicates that the father should be more sensitive and fearful of crossing this limit of Allah, the Exalted, and harming his former wife through their child. The father or mother should not belittle or disrespect each other in front of their child thereby aiming to diminish the love the child has for their parent. This is an evil devilish mentality as the role of a Muslim is to inculcate love and respect for others in the hearts of children. If they do the opposite the child will grow up not respecting or loving anyone and this will only increase the chances of their misguidance.

In addition, harming others in this way often happens within muslim marriages, whereby a person will use their child against their spouse in order obtain what they desire, such as moving to another home away from their spouse's relatives. Behaving in this manner is not a small thing as it has been prohibited directly in the Holy Quran. And behaving in this manner only causes more tension and problems between a couple, whether married or divorced, which only leads to more arguments and stress for everyone involved, especially the children.

Allah, the Exalted, also instructs the father's family to fulfil his responsibility towards his children and former wife in the case of his death. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 233:

"…And upon the [father's] heir is [a duty] like that [of the father]…"

Again, many muslim families overlook this instruction and are instead quick to abandon the former wife and children of their deceased relative, even though they must aid them according to the teachings of Islam. A family must try their best to fill the void left by their deceased relative in the life of his children so that they are raised in the correct way and therefore achieve peace of mind in both worlds. Families abandoning the children of their deceased relative in this way is a major cause for the misguidance of these children, which often leads them to a life of crime and prison.

As Allah, the Exalted, knows the bad behaviour people can show each other, He allows for alternate arrangements to be made to nurse the child if both parties agree. But mutual consultation and agreement must occur before any decisions over the children are made. Both the mother and father have a right to be involved in any decisions that are made regarding their child. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 233:

"…And if they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them. And if you wish to have your children nursed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you as long as you give payment according to what is acceptable…"

Allah, the Exalted, then warns both parents to behave in the best interest of their child and not let any negative feelings for each other prevent this in anyway as Allah knows their intention, speech and actions and will hold them accountable in both worlds. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 233:

"…And fear Allāh and know that Allāh is Seeing of what you do."

Generally speaking, muslims must strive to fulfil the rights of their children by providing them the tools to succeed, according to their means, in both their worldly and religious lives so that they achieve peace of mind in both worlds. Sadly, many parents strive hard to ensure their children succeed in the world but fail to put the same effort into their religious development,

even though the latter is more important and far reaching. Sending a child to the Mosque to learn how to recite the Holy Quran in a language they do not understand is not good enough. Each parent must teach their child the knowledge of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will ensure their child accepts and acts on Islamic knowledge knowing it is best for them. This will ensure they use the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, which will lead them to a balanced mental and physical state. This in turn leads to peace of mind in both worlds. Failing in one's duty towards their children is a major cause of their misguidance, which is something every parent will answer for in both worlds. In this world, their child will become a source of stress and misery for them and what comes in the hereafter will be worse. A parent can only free themself of this stress if they strive to fulfil the rights of their children seeking the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. Meaning, they should not seek any appreciation and payback from their children, as this only leads to bitterness, when their children fail to show them gratitude. And as they did not raise their children in order to please Allah, the Exalted, they will not gain any reward from Him either. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154.

Chapter 2 – Al Baqarah, Verses 234-235

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَٰجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا ۖ فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ
أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٤﴾
وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُم بِهِۦ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنتُمْ فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ
أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّآ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ۬ وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا۟
عُقْدَةَ ٱلنِّكَاحِ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ أَجَلَهُۥ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ
فَٱحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣٥﴾

“And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - they, [the wives, shall] wait four months and ten [days]. And when they have fulfilled their term, then there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner. And Allah is [fully] Aware of what you do.

There is no blame upon you for that to which you [indirectly] allude concerning a proposal to women or for what you conceal within yourselves. Allah knows that you will have them in mind. But do not promise them secretly except for saying a proper saying. And do not determine to undertake a marriage contract until the decreed period reaches its end. And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him. And know that Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing.”

Allah, the Exalted, then mentions the process a widow must adhere to after the death of her husband. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 234:

"*And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - they, [the wives, shall] wait four months and ten [days]…"*

During this waiting period the widow is entitled to remain in her deceased husband's home and is financially supported by his wealth. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 240:

"And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - for their wives is a bequest: maintenance for one year without turning [them] out…"

Sadly, many muslim families fail to fulfil this important duty and instead abandon the wife of their deceased relative, even though this has been warned against in the Holy Quran.

The waiting period for the widow allows for a pregnancy to manifest itself, which will obviously affect her future choices. In addition, the waiting period allows the wife to mourn over her deceased husband, within the limits taught of Islam, without rushing into future choices and decisions which she

may later regret, such as marriage to someone else. After the waiting period has passed, the widow is free to either remain single or remarry. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 234:

"…And when they have fulfilled their term, then there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable manner…"

As the plural word is used in this verse, it indicates the importance of the widow's relatives supporting her throughout her waiting period and in her future choices, such as marriage. It is even more important to support widows as they are in a difficult emotional state and are therefore more susceptible to making the wrong choices. Widows have been given a high status within Islam and must be supported according to one's means, such as emotional, physical and financial support, especially by her relatives. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6006, that a person can gain the same reward as the one who fasts every day and offers the voluntary prayer every night if they financially support a widow.

It is important to note that this verse also puts the widow's future choices in her hands, therefore, her relatives and the relatives of her deceased husband should not force her to make certain decisions, such as remaining single, if she desires to get married again. The role of the relatives is to support the widow emotionally, financially and physically, it is not to force her to make certain choices that please them. In addition, after the waiting period has elapsed, the widow should not feel like she has to live in a way which pleases her relatives or the relatives of her deceased husband.

Allah, the Exalted, has acknowledged her feelings and has granted her the freedom to make her own choices about her future and she should therefore not be influenced by stigma, the feelings of others or the opinions of social media, fashion and culture. As Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of one's intention, speech and actions, both the widow and her relatives must behave in the manner prescribed by Islam as they will all be held accountable for it in both worlds. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 234:

"…And Allah is [fully] Aware of what you do."

This yet again indicates the importance of understanding that the relationship between people and worldly matters are directly connected to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and the rights of people are directly connected and neither should be neglected.

Allah, the Exalted, then outlines that a proposal made to a widow, or a divorcee, must be done in a correct and respectful manner. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 235:

"There is no blame upon you for that to which you [indirectly] allude concerning a proposal to women or for what you conceal within yourselves. Allah knows that you will have them in mind. But do not promise them secretly except for saying a proper saying…"

A proper saying includes being open about the proposal and including the relatives of both sides instead of secretly promising the widow directly. A man should discuss the possibility of marriage in a dignified manner with the widow's family so that his good and noble intention is made clear to all. He should discuss it in a way he would like a man to discuss the possibility of marriage with his daughter or sister. As a widow is going through an emotional time, any secret proposals that are not suitable for her may be accepted, which will only add to her long term stress. Whereas, a proposal made public which involves the relatives of the widow can be dealt with in the correct manner whereby hasty decisions are avoided.

In addition, the waiting period must elapse first before a new marriage contract is undertaken. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 235:

"…*And do not determine to undertake a marriage contract until the decreed period reaches its end…"*

Some of the benefits of the waiting period have already been discussed earlier. Muslims must therefore adhere to the method prescribed by Allah, the Exalted, as it is the only way hasty decisions which one later regrets can be avoided while the best care is provided to the widow so that she can more easily move on with her life after the death of her husband. One must not ignore the commands of Islam as they will only cause trouble to themself and others, even if the commands contradict their desires. They

must behave like a wise patient who accepts and acts on the medical advice of their doctor knowing it is best for them, even though they are prescribed bitter medicines and a strict diet plan. The same way this wise patient will obtain good mental and physical health, so will the person who accepts and acts on the teachings of Islam. The one who fails to do so will not escape the consequences of their choices, as Allah, the Exalted, knows their intention, speech and actions and will hold them accountable in both worlds. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 235:

"…*And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him…"*

But as Islam is a religion of balance and mercy, the door of forgiveness and mercy is always open for them, even if they have disobeyed Allah, the Exalted, in the past. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 235:

"…*And know that Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing."*

Generally speaking, sincere repentance involves feeling guilty, seeking the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, and anyone who has been wronged, as long as this will not lead to further trouble, one must sincerely promise to avoid committing the same or similar sin again and make up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people.

The command to know the specific divine attributes mentioned in verse 235, indicates the importance of gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge so that one is encouraged to sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, according to the teachings of Islam without adopting deviated beliefs about Him which are disrespectful and are in some cases blasphemous. This is one of the reasons why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 2736, that whoever knows the ninety nine names of Allah, the Exalted, will enter Paradise. In addition, learning the divine attributes allows one to act on them according to their human potential. For example, the one who knows Allah, the Exalted, is All Merciful, will show mercy to others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 235:

"…*And know that Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing."*

The widow and her relatives must act on these two divine names so that they receive the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, in both worlds. The widow should strive to forgive her deceased husband for any mistakes he made and patiently accept the decree of Allah, the Exalted, knowing it is best for everyone involved, even if the wisdoms behind His choice are hidden from her. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

“…But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.”

In addition, the widow’s relatives should also show forbearance during the death of their relative and put any differences between them and the widow to one side and support her according to the teachings of Islam.

Chapter 2 – Al Baqarah, Verses 236-237

لَّا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ مَا لَمْ تَمَسُّوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا۟ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى ٱلْمُوسِعِ
قَدَرُهُۥ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُقْتِرِ قَدَرُهُۥ مَتَٰعًۢا بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٢٣٦﴾

وَإِن طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَمَسُّوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّآ أَن
يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَا۟ ٱلَّذِى بِيَدِهِۦ عُقْدَةُ ٱلنِّكَاحِ ۚ وَأَن تَعْفُوٓا۟ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَنسَوُا۟
ٱلْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٧﴾

“There is no blame upon you if you divorce women you have not touched [been intimate with] nor specified for them an obligation. But give them [a gift of] compensation - the wealthy according to his capability and the poor according to his capability - a provision according to what is acceptable, a duty upon the doers of good.

And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have already specified for them an obligation, then [give] half of what you specified - unless they forego the right or the one in whose hand is the marriage contract foregoes it. And to forego it is nearer to righteousness. And do not forget graciousness between you. Indeed Allah, of whatever you do, is Seeing.”

Allah, the Exalted, then moves onto discussing the issue of divorce before the marriage is consummated. There is no waiting period specified in these verses as there is no chance of a pregnancy and there is no point forcing the couple to live together during a waiting period if they are adamant they do not wish to officially begin married life together as this may cause unnecessary emotional trauma that may affect their future choice of getting married again. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 236:

"*There is no blame upon you if you divorce women you have not touched [been intimate with] nor specified for them an obligation…"*

But in the case where the dowry has not been set, Allah, the Exalted, makes it clear that an excellent muslim would give his former wife a parting gift in order to end things on a positive note. This gift should be given according to one's means and according to the social norm within the society while avoiding extravagance. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 236:

"…But give them [a gift of] compensation - the wealthy according to his capability and the poor according to his capability - a provision according to what is acceptable, a duty upon the doers of good."

Generally speaking, this has always been the principle of Islam. A person is only given a duty according to their means and they are only subjected to

tests that they can face while maintaining the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286:

“Allāh does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity…”

Therefore, muslims must avoid making excuses for failing in their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people. Sadly, many muslims claim to trying their best without realizing that if they were actually trying their best they would undoubtedly fulfill their duties, as this has been guaranteed by Allah, the Exalted. Adopting this lazy attitude only prevents one from fulfilling their duties and must therefore be avoided. Every command, prohibition and test one faces can be successfully fulfilled if they truly try their best. And whenever they happen to commit a sin, the door of sincere repentance is always open to them. Sincere repentance involves feeling guilty, seeking the forgiveness of Allah, the Exalted, and anyone who has been wronged, as long as this will not lead to further trouble. One must sincerely promise to avoid committing the same or similar sin again and make up for any rights which have been violated in respect to Allah, the Exalted, and people. Allah, the Exalted, therefore does not expect perfection, rather He expects people to sincerely strive to fulfil their duties.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 236:

“…a duty upon the doers of good.”

Islam always advises muslims to strive for excellence of faith. This is achieved when one sincerely learns and acts on Islamic teachings so that they use all the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure they fulfil the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and people. This excellence leads to a balanced mental and physical state which in turn leads to peace of mind and success in both worlds. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

Whereas, the one who adopts a lazy attitude whereby they do not strive to learn and act on Islamic knowledge, will easily misuse the blessings they have been granted. As a result, they will fail to fulfil the rights of Allah, the Exalted and people. Their attitude will prevent them from achieving a balanced mental and physical state, which will prevent them from achieving peace of mind, even if they experience moments of fun. This outcome is quite evident when one observes those who misuse the blessings they have been granted, such as the rich and famous. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 82:

“So let them laugh a little and [then] weep much as recompense for what they used to earn.”

And chapter 20 Taha, verses 124-126:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind." He will say, "My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?" [Allāh] will say, "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot [i.e., disregarded] them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten.""

Therefore, a person must accept and act on Islamic teachings for their own sake, even if it contradicts their desires. They must behave as a wise patient who accepts and acts on the medical advice of their doctor knowing it is best for them, even though they are prescribed bitter medicines and a strict diet plan. The same way this wise patient will achieve good mental and physical health, so will the person who accepts and acts on Islamic teachings. This is because the only One who has the knowledge required to ensure a person achieves a balanced mental and physical state is Allah, the Exalted. The knowledge of the mental and physical states of humans possessed by society will never be enough to achieve this outcome, despite all the research that has been undertaken, as they cannot solve every issue a person can face within their life nor can their advice cause one to avoid all types of mental and physical stress due to limited knowledge, experience and foresight. Allah, the Exalted, alone has this knowledge and He has granted it to mankind in the form of the Holy Quran

and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This truth is obvious when one observes those who use the blessings they have been granted according to Islamic teachings and those who do not.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 237:

“*And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have already specified for them an obligation, then [give] half of what you specified…”*

In the case a divorce occurs before the marriage is consummated and the dowry has been set, then the man must give half of it to his former wife. Sadly, many muslim men fail to give the dowry to their wives whether they remain married or seek a divorce, even though it is a duty to give it and an aspect of the marriage contract. This is a serious issue which will be questioned about on Judgement Day.

Allah, the Exalted, then encourages the former wife and her relatives to forgo the dowry in order to further ensure the divorce ends on good terms. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 237:

“*And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have already specified for them an obligation, then [give] half of what you specified - unless they forego the right or the one in whose hand is the marriage contract foregoes it. And to forego it is nearer to righteousness…”*

This could also mean that the former husband should forgo the command to give half the set dowry to his former wife and instead give her the whole thing as a gesture of kindness, as the marriage contract is in his hands. This has been mentioned in Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Volume 1, Pages 666-667. This again indicates the importance of kind treatment between the divorced couple and their relatives.

This verse also indicates the importance of the woman’s relatives being involved in her decision of choosing a husband. This is because, in most cases, the consequences of a woman choosing the wrong husband is more serious to her mental and physical health, than a man choosing the wrong wife. For example, domestic violence against the wife is far more common than domestic violence against the husband. In addition, in some cases, her male relatives, such as her brother, will more easily identify negative characteristics within the character of a potential husband than she can, as men understand other men better than women do. Just like women understand other women better than men do.

In addition, through the main verses, Allah, the Exalted, again indicates the importance of good behaviour between the divorced couple and their relatives and connects it to righteousness, something which is connected to His obedience. Sadly, many muslims often separate the rights and duties

towards Allah, the Exalted, from the rights and duties towards people, even though Islam has joined them. A person will not achieve peace of mind in both worlds until they fulfil both aspects, as they will answer for their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, and people, in both worlds. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 237:

“….And do not forget graciousness between you. Indeed Allah, of whatever you do, is Seeing.”

A person should remember that if they wrong others justice will be established on Judgement Day, even if they fulfil their duties towards Allah, the Exalted. The wrongdoer will be forced to hand over their good deeds to their victims and if necessary, the wrongdoer will take the sins of their victims until justice is established. This may well cause the wrongdoer to be hurled into Hell. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6579. One can fulfil the instruction of showing graciousness to others by treating others in a way one desires to be treated by society. In fact, loving for others what one loves for themself is the very definition of a true believer according to the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515.

Chapter 2 – Al Baqarah, Verses 238-239

حَٰفِظُواْ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱلۡوُسۡطَىٰ وَقُومُواْ لِلَّهِ قَٰنِتِينَ ٢٣٨

فَإِنۡ خِفۡتُمۡ فَرِجَالًا أَوۡ رُكۡبَانٗاۖ فَإِذَآ أَمِنتُمۡ فَٱذۡكُرُواْ ٱللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمۡ تَكُونُواْ تَعۡلَمُونَ ٢٣٩

“Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient.

And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding. But when you are secure, then remember Allah [in prayer], as He has taught you that which you did not [previously] know.”

The previous and next set of verses discuss marriage issues, such as divorce, and in between Allah, the Exalted, discussed the importance of establishing the obligatory prayers. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 238:

"*Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers…"*

One of the reasons is that Allah, the Exalted, is reminding all the people involved in marriage issues, such as the married couple and their relatives, to not forget the importance of their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, during the stress they are facing. Allah, the Exalted, gives guidance for them to minimize the stress they are facing during the marriage difficulties but also encourages them to continue fulfilling their other duties, such as the obligatory prayers. Maintaining one's connection to Allah, the Exalted, is extremely vital in all situations, especially during times of difficulties. One should therefore not let worldly stresses, such as marriage issues, prevent them from their other duties otherwise they will lose the mercy they need to correctly handle their worldly stresses.

In addition, as the five daily obligatory prayers are a regular reminder of Judgement Day, two specific benefits are derived from this regular reminder for those who are facing marriage problems. The first is that it encourages the one who is facing marriage issues, as well as other worldly problems, of the bigger and more serious reality of Judgement Day. As the stress of Judgement Day far outweighs any stress one can face in this world, remembering it reduces the seriousness of worldly stresses. This will aid one in correctly dealing with marriage issues without feeling overwhelmed. This is just like making a problem seem smaller when

comparing it to a bigger problem and stress. The second benefit of regularly remembering Judgement Day is that it reminds one that they will be held accountable for their intentions, speech and actions in both worlds. Therefore, the one who is facing marriage difficulties will ensure they speak and behave in the correct way, according to Islamic teachings, towards their former spouse and their relatives, as they know they will be held accountable for their actions. Both of these benefits are crucial for one to correctly face marriage issues, and other worldly problems, so that they overcome these difficulties while obtaining peace of mind and so that they correctly prepare for Judgement Day, which is the primary purpose of all people.

In addition, as the one who maintains their obedience of Allah, the Exalted, such as establishing their obligatory prayers, will treat their spouse correctly out of fear of being held accountable on Judgement Day, this indicates the importance of choosing a spouse who possesses these qualities. Only the person who possesses these qualities will treat their spouse in the correct way, even when they are angry with them. Whereas, the one who does not possess these qualities will easily wrong their spouse and fail to fulfil their rights, especially when they are angry with them. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5090.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 238:

“*Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers…”*

Establishing the obligatory prayers includes fulfilling them with their full conditions and etiquettes, such as offering them on time. Establishing the obligatory prayers is often repeated in the Holy Quran as it is the most important practical proof of one's faith in Allah, the Exalted. In addition, as discussed earlier, as the daily prayers are all spread out, they act as a constant reminder of the Day of Judgement and practically preparing for it, as each stage of the obligatory prayer is connected to Judgement Day. When one stands up right, this is how they will stand in front of Allah, the Exalted, on Judgement Day. Chapter 83 Al Mutaffifin, verses 4-6:

"Do they not think that they will be resurrected. For a tremendous Day The Day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds?"

When they bow, it reminds them of the many people who will be criticized on Judgement Day for not bowing to Allah, the Exalted, during their lives on Earth. Chapter 77 Al Mursalat, verse 48:

"And when it is said to them, "Bow [in prayer]," they do not bow."

This criticism also includes not practically submitting to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of one's life. When one prostrates in the prayer, it reminds them of how people will be invited to prostrate to Allah, the Exalted, on Judgement Day. But those who did not prostrate correctly

to Him during their lives on Earth, which involves obeying Him in all aspects of their lives, will not be able to do this on Judgement Day. Chapter 68 Al Qalam, verses 42-43:

"On the Day when matters become dire, they will be invited to prostrate themselves but will be prevented from doing so. Their eyes humbled, humiliation will cover them. And they used to be invited to prostration while they were sound."

When one sits on their knees in the prayer, it reminds them of how they will be sitting in this position in front of Allah, the Exalted, on the Day of Judgement, fearing their final judgement. Chapter 45 Al Jathiyah, verse 28:

"And you will see every nation kneeling [from fear]. Every nation will be called to its record [and told], "Today you will be recompensed for what you used to do.""

The one who prays with these elements in mind will establish their prayers correctly. This in turn will ensure they sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, in between the prayers. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 45:

"…Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing…"

This obedience involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Him as outlined in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 238:

“*Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer…”*

The middle prayer could be the late afternoon prayer (Asr) or the dawn prayer (Fajar). The Islamic calendar places the night before the day. So according to this method, the first prayer of the day would be the sunset prayer (Magrib) and therefore, the middle prayer becomes the dawn prayer (Fajar). Whereas, if the first prayer of the day is considered in respect to daylight then it would mean that the first prayer would be the dawn prayer (Fajar). According to this method the middle prayer becomes the late afternoon prayer (Asr). Many scholars have opted for the late afternoon prayer (Asr) as the middle prayer. This has been supported by Hadiths, such as the one found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2983. Either way one should aim to establish both as this leads to establishing the rest of the obligatory prayers. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 574, where the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that whoever establishes the two cool obligatory prayers will enter Paradise. The two cool obligatory prayers refer

to the dawn prayer (Fajar) and the late afternoon prayer (Asr), as the temperature tends to be cooler at these times. As these two obligatory prayers are arguably the hardest to establish, as they occur at difficult times or times when people are often distracted by other things, the one who establishes them will find it easier to establish the other obligatory prayers.

The one who establishes their obligatory prayers will be encouraged to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, throughout their day and throughout every situation they face, such as marriage problems. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 238:

“Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient.”

This obedience involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in Islamic teachings. This will ensure one fulfils the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and people. This leads to a balanced mental and physical state, which in turn leads to peace of mind in both worlds. chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely

give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

A person must accept and act on Islamic teachings for their own sake, even if it contradicts their desires. They must behave as a wise patient who accepts and acts on the medical advice of their doctor knowing it is best for them, even though they are prescribed bitter medicines and a strict diet plan. The same way this wise patient will achieve good mental and physical health, so will the person who accepts and acts on Islamic teachings. This is because the only One who has the knowledge required to ensure a person achieves a balanced mental and physical state is Allah, the Exalted. The knowledge of the mental and physical states of humans possessed by society will never be enough to achieve this outcome, despite all the research that has been undertaken, as they cannot solve every issue a person can face within their life nor can their advice cause one to avoid all types of mental and physical stress due to limited knowledge, experience and foresight. Allah, the Exalted, alone has this knowledge and He has granted it to mankind in the form of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This truth is obvious when one observes those who use the blessings they have been granted according to Islamic teachings and those who do not. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 238:

“…stand before Allah, devoutly obedient.”

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 239:

“And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding. But when you are secure, then remember Allah [in prayer], as He has taught you…”

In connection to the surrounding verses which discuss marriage issues, this verse could indicate the importance of maintaining one’s connection to Allah, the Exalted, during times of difficulty, such as marriage problems, and during times of ease. As mentioned earlier, maintaining this connection is vital for one to receive the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, and to maintain one’s focus on sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, so that they achieve peace of mind in both worlds.

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 239:

“And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding. But when you are secure, then remember Allah [in prayer], as He has taught you…”

This verse also indicates the easy nature of Islam. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 185:

“…Allāh intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship…”

Islam has been revealed by Allah, the Exalted, the One who created people and best knows what is suited for their nature and lives. Just like a doctor is best suited to advise a sick person, Allah, the Exalted, is best suited to advise people on every aspect of their lives. It is strange how a person can trust a doctor, who is prone to making mistakes and who possesses very limited knowledge and foresight while the patient is unaware of how the medicines they are prescribed work within the human body, yet they fail to trust Allah, the Exalted, who knows all things and cannot make mistakes and instead doubt that acting on what He advises leads to peace of mind and body. Trusting in Allah, the Exalted, only occurs when one learns and acts on Islamic knowledge and the clear proofs therein, such as the promise of Allah, the Exalted, of aiding those who sincerely obey Him and the events in history and present time which supports this promise. And how disobeying Him, by misusing the blessings one has been granted, leads to stress and trouble in both worlds and the events of history and present time which supports this warning. These clear proofs will cause one to adopt certainty of faith, which in turn will encourage them to sincerely obey Allah, the Exalted, by using the blessings they have been granted in ways pleasing to Him, as outlined in Islamic teachings. This leads to a balanced mental and physical state which in turn leads to peace of mind in both worlds. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 97:

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do."

Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 239:

“And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding. But when you are secure, then remember Allah [in prayer], as He has taught you…”

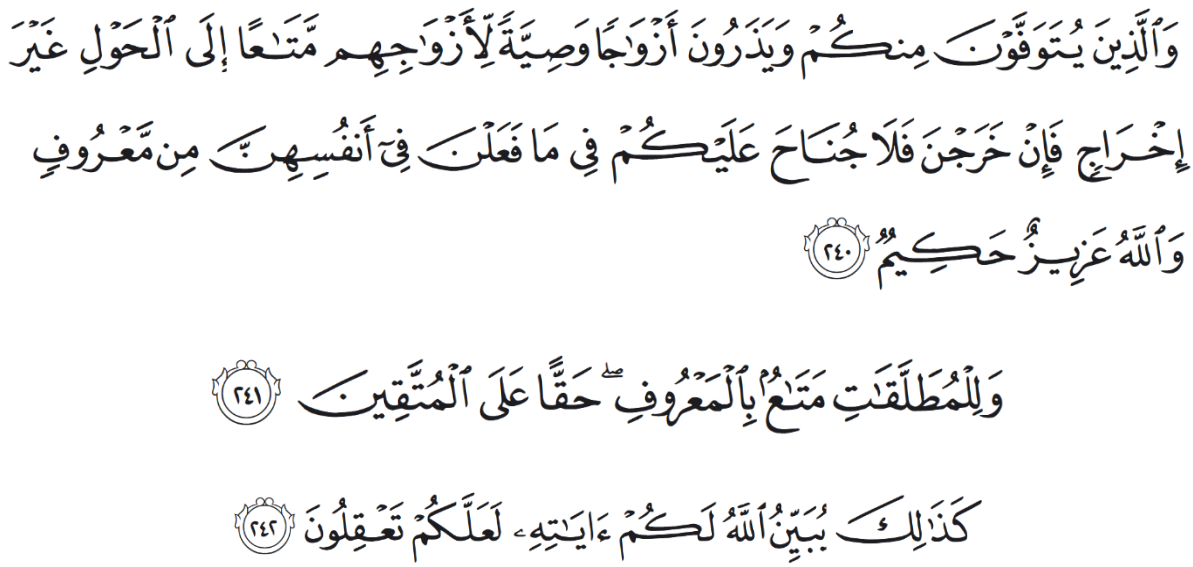
This verse also indicates the importance of understanding that remembering Allah, the Exalted, is more than just verbally mentioning His name and divine attributes. The real remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, involves remembering Allah, the Exalted, in one’s intention, so that they only act in order to please Him. Those who act in order to please others will not gain reward from Allah, the Exalted. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154. A positive sign of a good intention is when one does not desire nor hope for any gratitude or payback from people. Remembering Allah, the Exalted, with the tongue involves speaking good or remaining silent. And remembering Allah, the Exalted, in one's actions involves using the blessings one has been granted in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted, as outlined in Islamic teachings. When all aspects of the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted, are fulfilled it leads to a balanced mental and physical state, as a person will place everything and everyone within their lives in the correct place. This in turn leads to peace of mind in both worlds. Chapter 13 Ar Ra’d, verse 28:

“…Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah do hearts find peace."

As indicated in the end of verse 239, adopting this behaviour is also how one shows gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, for all the blessings He has granted them. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 239:

“…then remember Allāh [in prayer], as He has taught you that which you did not [previously] know.”

Chapter 2 – Al Baqarah, Verses 240-242


وَٱلَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَٰجًا وَصِيَّةً لِّأَزْوَٰجِهِم مَّتَٰعًا إِلَى ٱلْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ
إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى مَا فَعَلْنَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِنَّ مِن مَّعْرُوفٍ
وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ٢٤٠

وَلِلْمُطَلَّقَٰتِ مَتَٰعٌۢ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ٢٤١

كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ٢٤٢

“And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - for their wives is a bequest: maintenance for one year without turning [them] out. But if they leave [of their own accord], then there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable way. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.

And for divorced women is a provision according to what is acceptable - a duty upon the righteous.

Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you might use reason.”

Allah, the Exalted, then continues discussing the situation of a widow. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 240:

"*And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - for their wives is a bequest: maintenance for one year without turning [them] out…"*

As the widow is going through an extremely emotional time, she should remain within her husband's home instead of being uprooted, which only increases one's stress. In addition, to help the widow manage her grief, she must be financially supported from her deceased husband's estate or supported by his relatives. Sadly, this duty is often overlooked by the deceased husband's relatives and they often send the widow back to her relatives, even though aiding her is a duty on them according to the Holy Quran. Allah, the Exalted, put these rules into place in order to emotionally, physically and financially aid the widow and must therefore be fulfilled by muslims. They must treat the widow of their deceased relative, how they desire their own relative to be treated if their husband died.

In order to reconcile the different verses which discuss how long a widow should remain in her deceased husband's home, a widow must remain in the home during her waiting period of four months and ten days and then she can either remain for the rest of the year or leave after her waiting period is over. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 234:

“And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - they, [the wives, shall] wait four months and ten [days]….”

And chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 240:

“And those who are taken in death among you and leave wives behind - for their wives is a bequest: maintenance for one year without turning [them] out. But if they leave [of their own accord]…”

In addition, the maintenance for one year could have been explained in detail in the following verse or could be considered separate to the specific inheritance allocated to the widow in this verse. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 12:

“…And for them [i.e., the wives] is one fourth if you leave no child. But if you leave a child, then for them is an eighth of what you leave, after any bequest you [may have] made or debt…”

The waiting period for the widow allows for a pregnancy to manifest itself, which will obviously affect her future choices. In addition, the waiting period allows the widow to mourn over her deceased husband, within the limits of Islam, without rushing into future choices and decisions which she may

later regret, such as marriage to someone else. After the waiting period has passed, the widow is free to either remain single or remarry. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 240:

"…But if they leave [of their own accord], then there is no blame upon you for what they do with themselves in an acceptable way…"

As the plural word is used in this verse, it indicates the importance of the widow's relatives supporting her throughout her waiting period and in her future choices, such as marriage. It is even more important to support widows as they are in a difficult emotional state and are therefore more susceptible to making the wrong choices. Widows have been given a high status within Islam and must be supported according to one's means, such as emotional, physical and financial support, especially by her relatives. For example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6006, that a person can gain the same reward as the one who fasts every day and offers the voluntary prayer every night if they financially support a widow.

It is important to note that this verse also puts the widow's future choices in her hands, therefore, her relatives and the relatives of her deceased husband should not force her to make certain decisions, such as remaining single, if she desires to get married again. The role of the relatives is to support the widow emotionally, financially and physically, it is not to force her to make certain choices that please them. In addition, after the waiting period has elapsed, the widow should not feel like she has to live in a way which pleases her relatives or the relatives of her deceased husband.

Allah, the Exalted, has acknowledged her feelings and has granted her the freedom to make her own choices about her future and she should therefore not be influenced by stigma, the feelings of others or the opinions of social media, fashion and culture. As Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of one's intention, speech and actions, both the widow and her relatives must behave in the manner prescribed by Islam as they will all be held accountable in both worlds. In addition, as Allah, the Exalted, is All Wise, He alone can prescribe the best code of conduct people should follow, such as widows, in order to achieve peace of mind. Therefore, the opinions of people which contradict His advice should be ignored. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 240:

"…And Allāh is Exalted in Might and Wise."

After discussing the good treatment of widows, Allah, the Exalted, then finishes the discussion on marriage by indicating the importance of good treatment towards divorced women. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 241:

"And for divorced women is a provision according to what is acceptable - a duty upon the righteous."

During the waiting period, divorced women must be maintained by their former husband and during the period when they are nursing their child. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 233:

“Mothers may nurse [i.e., breastfeed] their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is their [i.e., the mothers'] provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable…”

By declaring that treating divorced women in the best manner is a duty on the righteous, indicates that a person cannot achieve piety until they behave in this manner, even if they fulfil the rights of Allah, the Exalted. This yet again indicates the importance of understanding that the relationship between people and worldly matters are directly connected to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, the rights of Allah, the Exalted, and the rights of people are directly connected and neither should be neglected.

In addition, this verse indicates the importance of choosing a spouse who has piety. This is because they are the only one who will fulfill the rights of their spouse, according to the teachings of Islam, even when they are angry with them. Whereas, the one who does not possess piety will mistreat their spouse and fail to fulfil their rights, especially when they are angry with them. Choosing a spouse based on their piety has been advised throughout Islamic teachings, such as the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 5090.

The discussion in this and the previous section of verses will only be accepted and acted upon by those who use their common sense and identify the widespread benefits of its advice and teachings. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 242:

“Thus does Allāh make clear to you His verses that you might use reason.”

It is vital to understand that any man-made law or code of conduct will never be perfect as it will be biased, short-sighted and limited by knowledge. This will prevent people from achieving a balanced mental and physical state within their lives, which in turn will prevent them from achieving peace of mind. Whereas, the code of conduct granted by Allah, the Exalted, will always be perfect as He knows all things, including the mental and physical states of humans, something no society can ever encompass fully in knowledge even with the research that has been carried out on this topic. Therefore, Allah, the Exalted, is the only One who can grant people a code of conduct which leads to a balanced mental and physical state, which in turn leads to peace of mind. Just like a doctor is the best person to advise on medicine, Allah, the Exalted, is the only One who can provide the best advice in every aspect of one’s life. In addition, as the teachings of Islam are designed for the nature of humans, they are timeless, just like the nature of humans is timeless. And the teachings of Islam can be acted upon by anyone, irrespective of their level of knowledge, as they are easy to understand and apply in one’s life. Whereas, the vast majority of advice given by others, such as motivational speakers, is impractical, even if they sound exciting. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 242:

“Thus does Allāh make clear to you His verses that you might use reason.”

This is a fitting way of ending around twenty consecutive verses which discuss the extremely important constitution of marriage, divorce, the children of the divorced couple and widows.

Even though there are many worldly issues people can face yet all of them have not been addressed by the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran addresses the root problems instead of addressing the branch problems. Fixing one branch problem will eventually lead to another branch problem. Whereas, targeting the root problem eliminates all the branch problems indefinitely. In this case, the Holy Quran did not discuss every issue a married couple can experience instead it discussed the root issue and how to deal with them appropriately. For a marriage to work and the rights of both spouses to be fulfilled, good character between the couple and fearing Allah, the Exalted, is required. Instead of forcing unhappy married couples to stay together, Allah, the Exalted, has given them a lawful way out namely, divorce. But He has made it clear that good character and the fear of Allah, the Exalted, must be maintained throughout the divorce proceedings, which minimizes the physical and emotional stress the wife, husband and children will go through. Allah, the Exalted, has commanded each wife and husband to fulfill the rights of the children involved during a divorce so that the negative impact of the divorce is minimized. This tactic again addresses a root problem which leads to countless branch problems. If one observes the children which do not succeed in education and often end up in criminal gangs, juvenile courts, detention centers and prisons, they will observe that they come from unhappy or broken families where their parents, whether

together or divorced, fail to fulfil the rights of each other and the rights of the child.

Allah, the Exalted, encourages marriage and forbids unlawful relationships. When a couple are not truly devoted to each other, like a married couple, then any real difficulties they face will lead to more emotional stress for the couple, as they fail to support each other correctly. Coming in and out of multiple relationships over one's life undoubtedly has a detrimental effect on their mental health. It is no surprise that those who separate from their partners often end up in counselling. They end up suffering from mental disorders, such as depression, more than those who avoid these relationships. In addition, those who are known within the society for having multiple partners are less likely to find a suitable spouse who will fulfill their rights. This is because the one who has had multiple partners within their life will adopt a loose and undesirable character, which people looking for a serious commitment, such as marriage, would dislike. This will only increase the emotional stress for the one who has had multiple partners. In casual relationships, the couple are often not on the same wavelength. Meaning, one of the two always takes the relationship more seriously, such as desiring to settle down with their partner. Whereas, the other does not feel the same about their future. When this difference in attitude eventually surfaces it often leads to long standing emotional trauma for the one who took the relationship more seriously. Whereas, a married couple from the very first step are on the same wavelength, in respect to their long-term commitment to one another. A married couple are devoted to each other in every situation, whether they face situations which are planned or unplanned, such as having children. This attitude is very rarely found amongst normal couples. Having a relationship with another also fools a person into believing they completely know their partner and so if they do get married they often complain about their spouse changing after marriage. In most cases, they did not change. The things that changed were the responsibilities and pressures of their relationship. This issue

often leads to marriage issues for those couples who were in a relationship prior to their marriage. Even if they live together prior to marriage, even then the same issue will occur. In addition, it is no secret that whenever one faces trouble with their partner how severely it affects every other aspect of their life. For example, many young people drop out of education simply because they cannot face seeing their former partner every day. As marriage is a deep connection and commitment between two people, they are less likely to breakup over the same petty issues normal couples breakup over.

In addition, a person must not be fooled into the outward appearance of an unlawful relationship believing there is no harm in it for the couple or the wider society. As people have limited knowledge, are extremely short sighted and are often controlled by their emotions, they can incorrectly believe having a relationship outside marriage is harmless whereas they fail to see the hidden poison which will negatively affect them and others. A muslim in an unlawful relationship will only be encouraged to take further steps and commit sins with their partner, over time. As emotions and feelings are difficult to control and as these sins, such as fornication, have become normalized within most societies, a non-married couple may easily fall into these sins. This leads to countless other problems for them and society, such as unwanted pregnancies and even belittling other major sins within Islam. In addition, even if one does not commit any other major sins within their unlawful relationship, such as fornication, then their feelings will prevent them from thinking clearly and as a result they may well marry their partner, without realizing they are not a suitable spouse, even if they seemed to be a good partner. As discussed earlier, this is because the stress and responsibilities of marriage, such as fulfilling the rights of one’s spouse and children, change the relationship between the couple, which in turn often leads to marriage problems. This is why married couples who were together before marriage often accuse each other of changing their behaviour after marriage. In addition, no matter how much time one spends

with their partner, they will never get to know their character like a married couple know each other. Hidden negative characteristics in each of them will become manifest after marriage, which only leads to further marriage problems. A truth which is often overlooked by someone who is in an illegal relationship is that a person who makes a good partner is not guaranteed to make a good spouse or a good parent. This is because different characteristics are required to make a good spouse and parent compared to making a good partner. Because of their feelings for their partner, a person will often overlook the importance of choosing a pious person to marry, as they are the only one who will fulfill the rights of their spouse and children and will avoid harming them, even when they are angry. Whereas, a person who does not have piety, will not fulfill the rights of their spouse or children and will wrong them, especially when they are angry. The one who has a partner will overlook this important point and as a result they will marry their partner because of their feelings for them, even if they do not possess piety. Emotions, such as love, make a person blind and deaf to the negative characteristics of their beloved. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 5130.

In addition, any children that are born unintentionally from the relationship will put further stress on their relationship, which often results in them splitting up, as they do not desire to share the responsibility of raising a child. This creates a broken home for the child to grow up in where they do not have the support and supervision of both parents, which often leads to trouble for everyone. It is a clear fact that the majority of youth involved in crimes, gangs and those children who are groomed by sexual predators and are victims of domestic violence, come from broken families. Raising a child correctly when one desires a child is extremely hard, then can one imagine the emotional stress of raising a child correctly when the parent did not desire to have the child in the first place? This negatively effects the upbringing of the child and often leads to the problems mentioned earlier. This stress often leads to the single parent giving up the child for fostering

or adoption, which in the majority of cases, has a detrimental negative and long term impact on the child, some of which were mentioned earlier. This further increases the chances of the child becoming misguided.

All of these and more negative things within unlawful relationships cannot be appreciated by someone who is emotional or ignorant, even if unlawful relationships appear harmless. Getting involved in unlawful relationships is just like consuming a meal which appears delicious when it is in fact poisoned. As this poison is hidden, one must rely on someone who is aware of this poison and trust their advice to avoid eating the meal which appears delicious, even if this contradicts their desires. As Allah, the Exalted, alone knows all things, especially, the hidden poisons within certain actions and relationships, His advice must be accepted and acted upon, even if it contradicts one's desires. This is similar to a wise patient who accepts and acts on the medical advice of their doctor knowing it is best for them, even though they are prescribed bitter medicines and a strict diet plan. The same way this wise patient will achieve good mental and physical health, so will the person who accepts and acts on Islamic teachings. This is because the only One who has the knowledge required to ensure a person achieves a balanced mental and physical state is Allah, the Exalted. The knowledge of the mental and physical states of humans possessed by society will never be enough to achieve this outcome, despite all the research that has been undertaken, as they cannot solve every issue a person can face within their life nor can their advice cause one to avoid all types of mental and physical stress due to limited knowledge, experience and foresight. Allah, the Exalted, alone has this knowledge and He has granted it to mankind in the form of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This truth is obvious when one observes those who act on Islamic teachings by correctly using the blessings they have been granted and those who do not.

Allah, the Exalted, removed these numerous branch problems by addressing the root problem meaning, forbidding unlawful relationships and encouraging marriage, whereby a couple sincerely devote themselves to each other and their children.

By addressing the concept of marriage, divorce, widows and children in the Holy Quran, Allah, the Exalted, has given the key to a successful society. When the members of the family, whether together or divorced, fulfill each other's rights and create a stable and happy home for the children, it causes a positive ripple effect throughout society. Conversely, when a family is unhappy and fail to fulfil each other's rights, then it causes a negative ripple effect which spreads throughout society.

Many thinkers have come and gone which have addressed the issues people and society face but as these solutions target branch issues the benefit of these solutions are minimal. Whereas, Allah, the Exalted, through this method of addressing root issues, which affect an individual and the society, has clarified all things so that people can achieve success in both worlds. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 89:

"…And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy…"

But as indicated by verse 242, only those who use the intelligence they have been granted correctly will understand the profound wisdom within the verses of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 242:

“Thus does Allāh make clear to you His verses that you might use reason.”

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